

First Record of the Taipan for Western Australia.—On November 6, 1978 I collected a Taipan (*Oxyuranus scutellatus*) at 6 km WNW of Amax Camp, Mitchell Plateau, northwest Kimberley. The country here was lateritic and carried a woodland savanna of *Eucalyptus tetradonta*, *E. miniata* and the palm *Livistona eastonii*. Previously this deadly snake was known from the 'Top End' of the Northern Territory, northern and eastern Queensland and New Guinea.

The specimen is now lodged in the Western Australian Museum (registered number R60666). It is 136 cm long, including the 22 cm long tail. The fangs are very long and strongly curved. The dorsal scales are long, narrow, weakly ridged and in 23 rows at mid body. It has 2 + 2 temporals on one side and 2 + 3 on the other, 241 ventrals and 69 subcaudals; the anal is undivided. It is uniformly dark greyish brown above and brownish white below.

—W. H. BUTLER. Wanneroo.

Second Record of European Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo hirundo*) from Western Australia.—On July 21, 1978, after several days of stormy weather, Mr. and Mrs. J. McLean found an exhausted tern on their farm 4 km south-east of Metricup. They give it to Mr. B. Masters, the district Fisheries and Wildlife Officer. The bird died soon after, and realising that it was one of the rarer migratory terns Mr. Masters sent it to the Western Australian Museum.

Details of the specimen (A15670) are as follows: male (testes, 4.5 x 2 mm and 2.5 x 1.5 mm); weight, 95 g; total length, 310 mm; length of wing, 240 mm; entire culmen, 48 mm; tarsus, 18 mm; tail, 99 mm; bill dark red with a blackish tinge to the cutting edges of the upper and lower mandibles near tip, legs red, forehead whitish speckled with black, rest of cap black, upper tail white, under parts white with a greyish wash.

The red bill and white upper tail distinguish the European Common Tern from the Eastern Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo longipennis*), which has a black bill minutely tipped with horn and pale grey upper tail (dark grey on outer edge of tail streamers). Length of tarsus and wing and the colour of the second outer primary distinguish the Common Tern from the very similar Arctic and Roseate Terns. In the Arctic and Common Terns the under parts can be grey or white; whereas in the Roseate Tern the under parts are always white.

The European Common Tern breeds in northern Europe and normally only migrates as far south as southern Africa. Serventy and Whittell (*Birds of Western Australia*, 1976, p. 244), give details of the first Western Australian specimen found at Coogee beach near Fremantle on January 7, 1956. The only other Australian specimen was found dead after gales in Victoria in October 1968. The Eastern Common Tern breeds in north-eastern Asia and North America and is a common summer visitor to the north-west coast of Western Australia.

—R. E. JOHNSTONE, Western Australian Museum.

Breeding Seabirds on Carnac Island, Western Australia.—While holidaying in Western Australia in 1976, my wife and I visited Carnac Island off Fremantle with our friend Jim Lane on September 10. In the time available a fairly thorough check was made of as much of the island as possible. Different types of habitats were carefully investigated for breeding seabirds, particularly the burrowing species.

Silver Gulls (*Larus novaehollandiae*) were nesting extensively over most of the island. Generally the nests contained eggs, but some were ready for laying and others were under construction. An accurate estimate of the number of breeding gulls was not made. However, the figure would run into thousands of pairs.

While carrying out the survey, one gull was found hanging by the leg and secured to a dead branch by a piece of fishing line. Apparently the nylon fishing line had become attached to the bird's foot and the line had then become tangled in the dead branch. The bird was suspended by the leg beneath the branch with its head a few centimetres above the ground. In its efforts to escape, the bird's leg had been broken at the joint. Released from its bondage, its broken leg amputated and given a drink, the bird was released and flew off strongly.

Pied Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax varius*) were nesting on the south-east corner of the island. There were about 500 recently-used nests and five large "runners" nearby. After some effort on our part, two were captured, banded and released. Ten nests, mostly along the low cliff edges, contained smaller young, but these were not disturbed.

Little Penguins (*Eudyptula minor*) were found nesting immediately at the back of the beach on the east side and a few along the centre of the west side at the base of the limestone cliffs. Two burrows each contained an adult incubating two eggs, one bird was in a burrow with two large, well-developed young and seven other burrows contained birds but the burrows were too deep to allow detailed investigation.

Wedge-tailed Shearwaters (*Puffinus pacificus*), at the time of the visit, would have been returning at night to prepare burrows for nesting. Some 30 burrows were found in a sandy patch about 40 m by about 40 m, near the south-western side of the island. Two other burrows were found in a similar but much smaller sandy area near the north-western end. All the burrows were freshly scratched, with numerous feet marks of the birds around the entrances and approaches. Most burrows were investigated but were invariably too deep to check thoroughly without undue damage to them. Even with the aid of a stick, the burrow ends could not be reached in most instances. No birds were found.

We saw no sign of the few eggs and chicks of the Crested Tern (*Sterna bergii*) or the large Caspian Tern (*Hydroprogne caspia*) chick recorded by I. Abbott (*W. Aust. Nat.*, 13, 1977: 196-199) during his visit which was a few days prior to ours.

The Sea-lions (*Neophoca cinerea*) on the beach and three Tiger Snakes (*Notechis scutatus*) completed the wildlife recorded during the visit.

I am grateful to Jim Lane for making the visit possible and for providing the transport.

—S. G. LANE, 65 Wood Street, Lane Cove, N.S.W.

A Disjunct Occurrence of *Pilostyles* on Two New Host Genera.—

Flowering specimens of the stem parasite *Pilostyles hamiltonii* C. A. Gardn. (Rafflesiaceae) were collected growing on two previously unrecorded host genera, viz. *Gastrolobium* and *Oxylobium*, whilst we were on a field trip to the Stirling Range National Park, on January 20, 1978. Until then, *Pilostyles* had only been recorded on *Daviesia* at Bannister, Boyagin, Busselton, Encabba, Mundaring and York, and on *Jacksonia* at Mt. Lesueur (Smith, *W. Aust. Nat.*, 2 (3), 1951: 21-24; B. Dell pers. comm.). The occurrence of *Pilostyles* in the Stirling Range greatly extends its known geographic range.

Pilostyles was collected during a climb up Bluff Knoll (34°22'S, 118°15'E). Ascent of this peak was made following the tourist track on the northern slope. During the climb one of us (K.C.P.) collected a species of Papilionaceae (later identified as *Oxylobium atropurpureum*) which we recognised as being infected with the stem parasite *Pilostyles*. Following this discovery further searching in the immediate area revealed a second host which has been identified as an undescribed species of *Gastrolobium*.